



Social Development  
Canada

Développement social  
Canada

# Understanding the Early Years



In  
Niagara Falls, Ontario

# Understanding the Early Years

- What is UEY?
  - National research and community planning initiative (funded by SDC)
- What is the purpose of UEY
  - Increase understanding of first 6 years of development
  - Assist communities by providing local information about 'readiness to learn'
  - Improve communities capacity for preparing children for school (readiness to learn)
- What is happening locally?
  - UEY Niagara Falls
  - UEY Niagara Region

# Understanding the Early Years

- Profiles early child development outcomes, or “readiness to learn”, in terms of children’s preparedness for school and the factors that influence these outcomes
- Share what we learn with community
- Build community understanding and support that will lead to action



# Success Stories - Nationally

- Contributed to national data collection, resulting in a series of reports on community research on child development in Canada
- Share best practices with UEY communities nation wide

# Success Stories - Provincially

- Consultation to support implementation of the EDI and Community Mapping across Ontario.
- MCFCS reviewed findings when planning for relocation of a critical program/service.

# Success Stories - Regionally

- Community Services Department cited UEY as a community partner in their child care plan
- Town of Fort Erie utilized findings in community health centre proposal
- Collaborative development of community resources and products (ex. Off To School Calendar 2005-6)

# Success Stories – Community Partners

OEY NF used findings for:

- Site planning
- Resource and program planning
- PD Training
- Successful bid on program (i.e.. Numeracy and social/emotional)
- Increasing public knowledge re: importance of Early Years (ex. Communiqués, community forums)

# Success Stories – Community Partners

DSBN / NCDSB used findings for:

- Development of successful funding proposal to foster children's social and emotional development (DSBN)
- Programming and resource allocation decision-making (NCDSB)
- PD planning for teachers and Principals
- Building knowledge on social/emotional issues among teachers and parents



# UEY Research Components

Community Mapping Study (CMS)

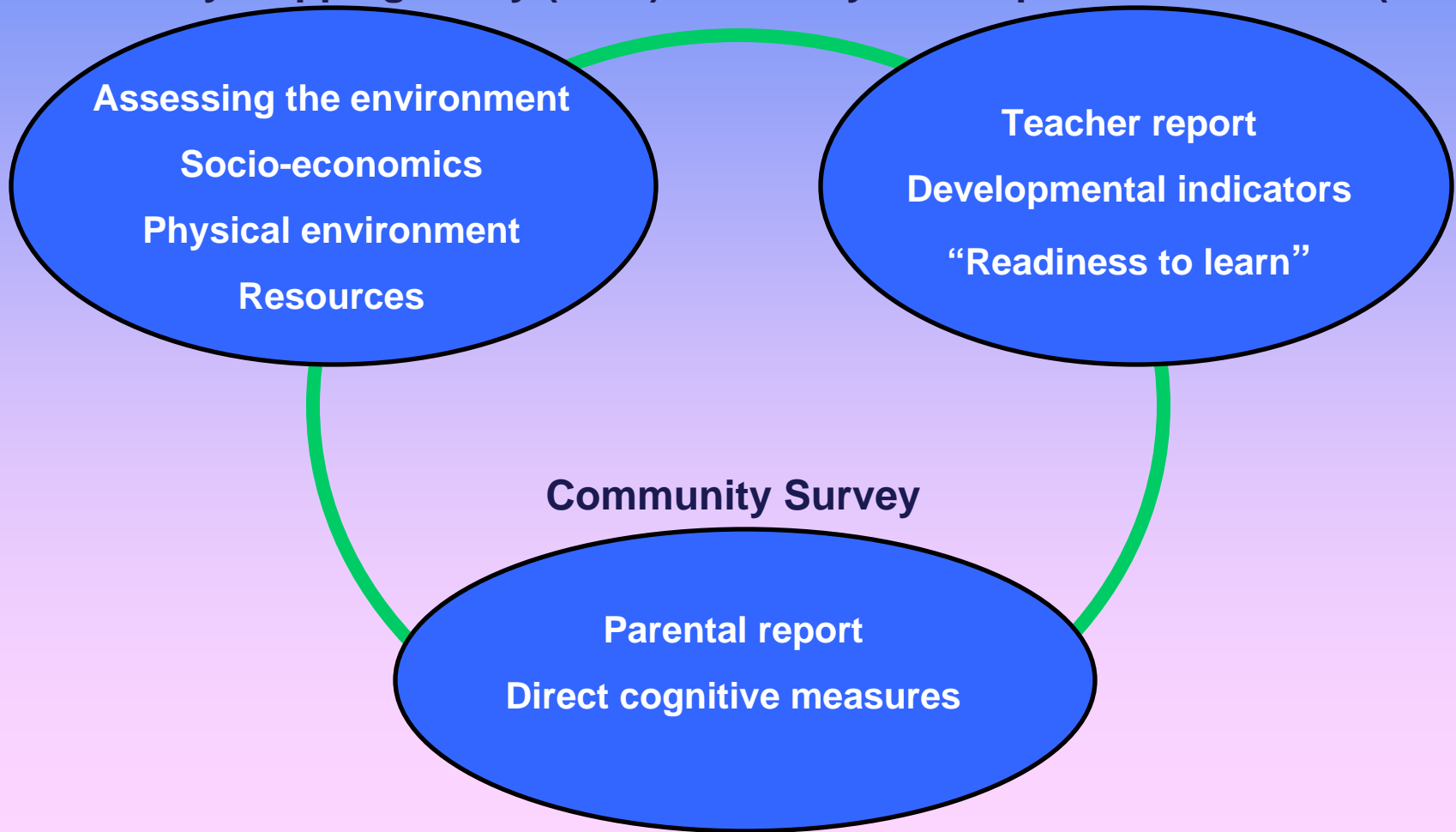
Early Development Instrument (EDI)

Assessing the environment  
Socio-economics  
Physical environment  
Resources

Teacher report  
Developmental indicators  
“Readiness to learn”

Community Survey

Parental report  
Direct cognitive measures



# Readiness to Learn

- Refers to the child's ability to meet the task demands of school, such as:
  - Being comfortable exploring and asking questions,
  - Listening to the teacher,
  - Playing and working with other children,
  - Remembering and following rules.

In short, it is the ability to benefit from the educational activities that are provided by the school.

# The EDI

Reports on populations of children at the community level, based on ***five domains***:

- Physical Health and Well-being
- Social Competence
- Emotional Maturity
- Language and Cognitive Development
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Subdomains

- **Physical Health and Well-being**
  1. Physical readiness for school day
  2. Physical independence
  3. Gross and fine motor skills
- **Social Competence**
  4. Overall social competence
  5. Responsibility and respect
  6. Approaches to learning
  7. Readiness to explore new things

# Subdomains

- **Emotional Maturity**
  - 8. Prosocial and helping behaviour
  - 9. Anxious and fearful behaviour
  - 10. Aggressive behaviour
  - 11. Hyperactivity and inattention
- **Language and Cognitive Development**
  - 12. Basic literacy
  - 13. Interest in literacy/numeracy and memory
  - 14. Advanced literacy
  - 15. Basic numeracy
- **Communication Skills and General Knowledge**
  - 16. Communication skills and general knowledge

# Physical Health and Well-being

- Children who are scoring low in this area are having difficulty with their gross and fine motor skills.
- Some children are also having problems with their physical readiness for the school day.

# Social Competence

- Children who are scoring low in this area are having difficulty with their approach to learning.
- They are also having problems with their overall social competence

# Emotional Maturity

- Children who are scoring low in this area are having difficulty with their prosocial and helping behaviour.
- They are also having problems with hyperactivity and inattention.
- Some are also displaying aggressive behaviour.



# Language and Cognitive Development

- Children who are scoring low in this area are having difficulty with their interest in literacy and numeracy and their memory.
- They are also having problems with advanced literacy.
- Some are also having problems with basic literacy and numeracy.

# Communication Skills and General Knowledge

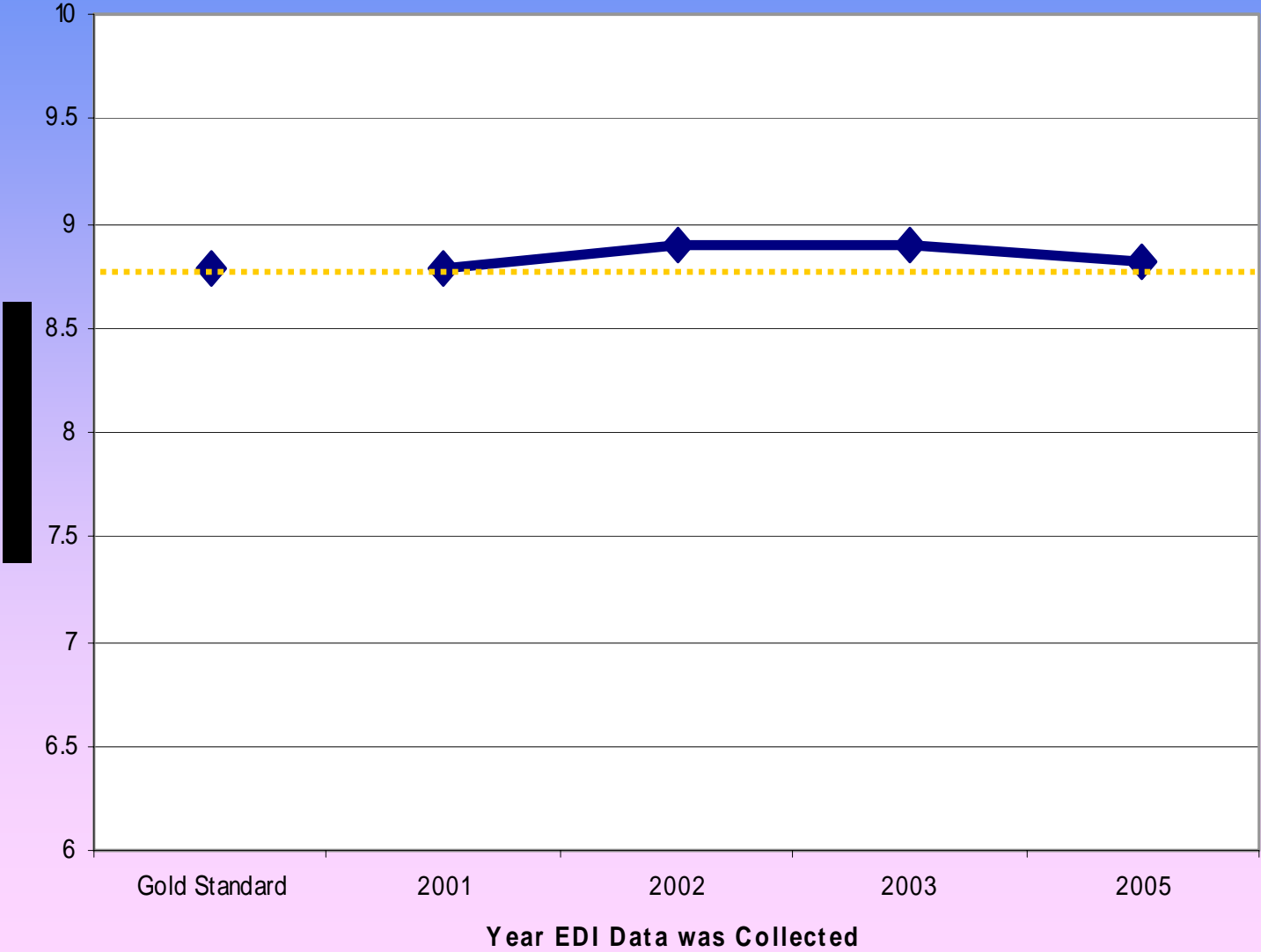
- Children who are scoring low in this area are having difficulty:
  - Using language effectively in English
  - Understanding what is being said to him/her on first try
  - Communicating their own needs in a way this is understandable to adults and peers
  - Answering questions showing knowledge about the world

# UEY Niagara Falls

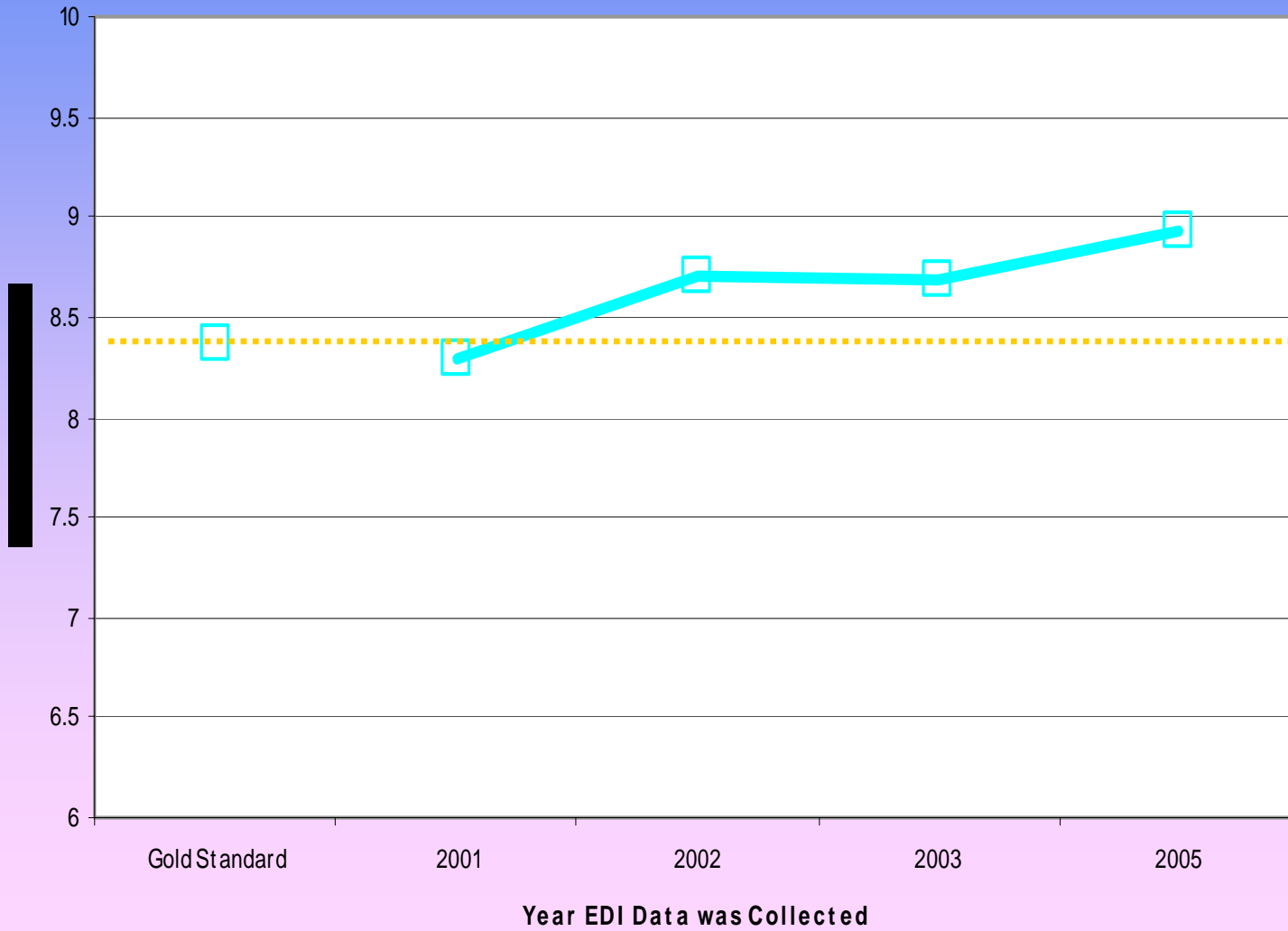
## Overall Results for 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005



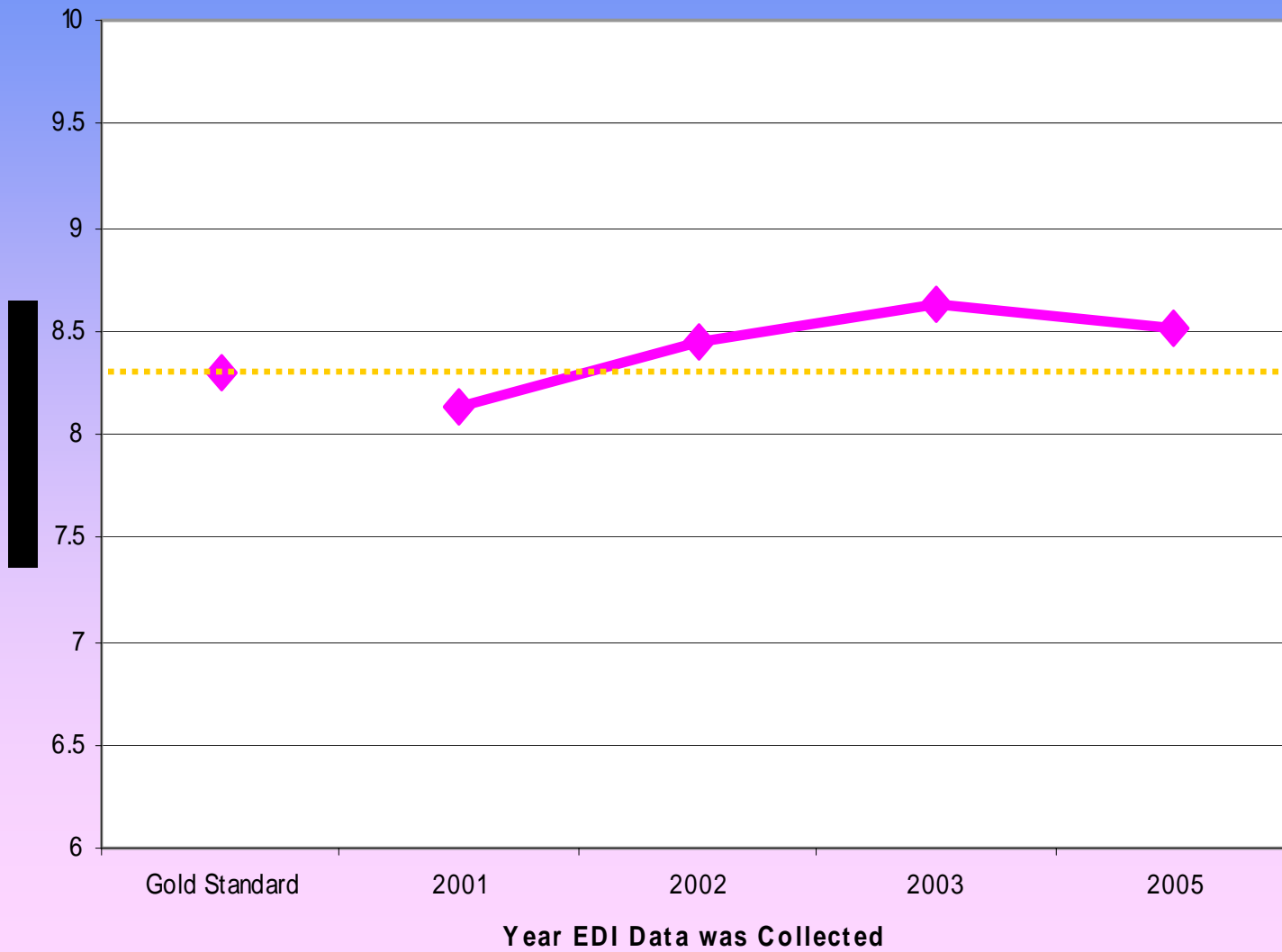
# Physical Health and Well-Being



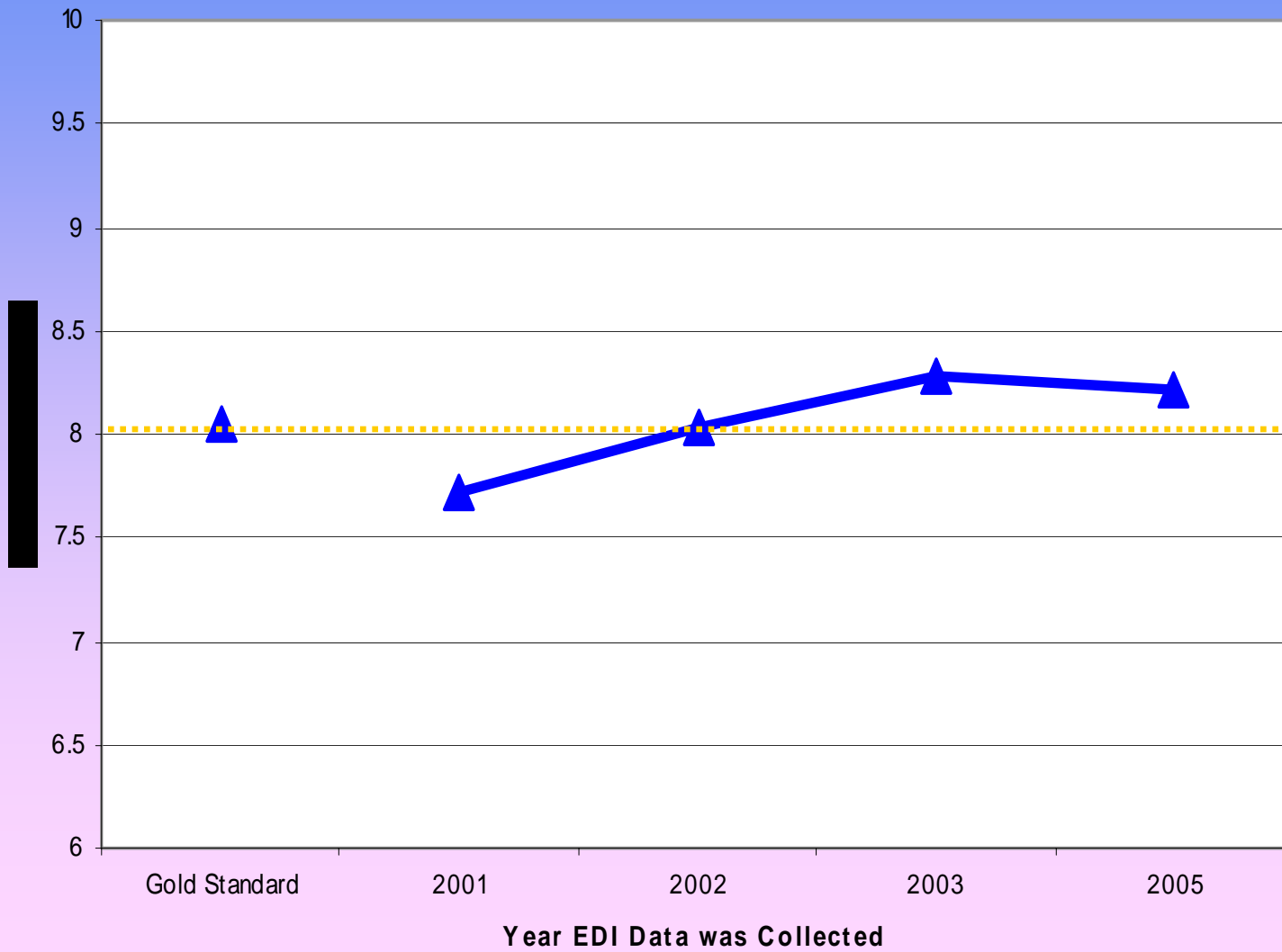
# Language and Cognitive Development



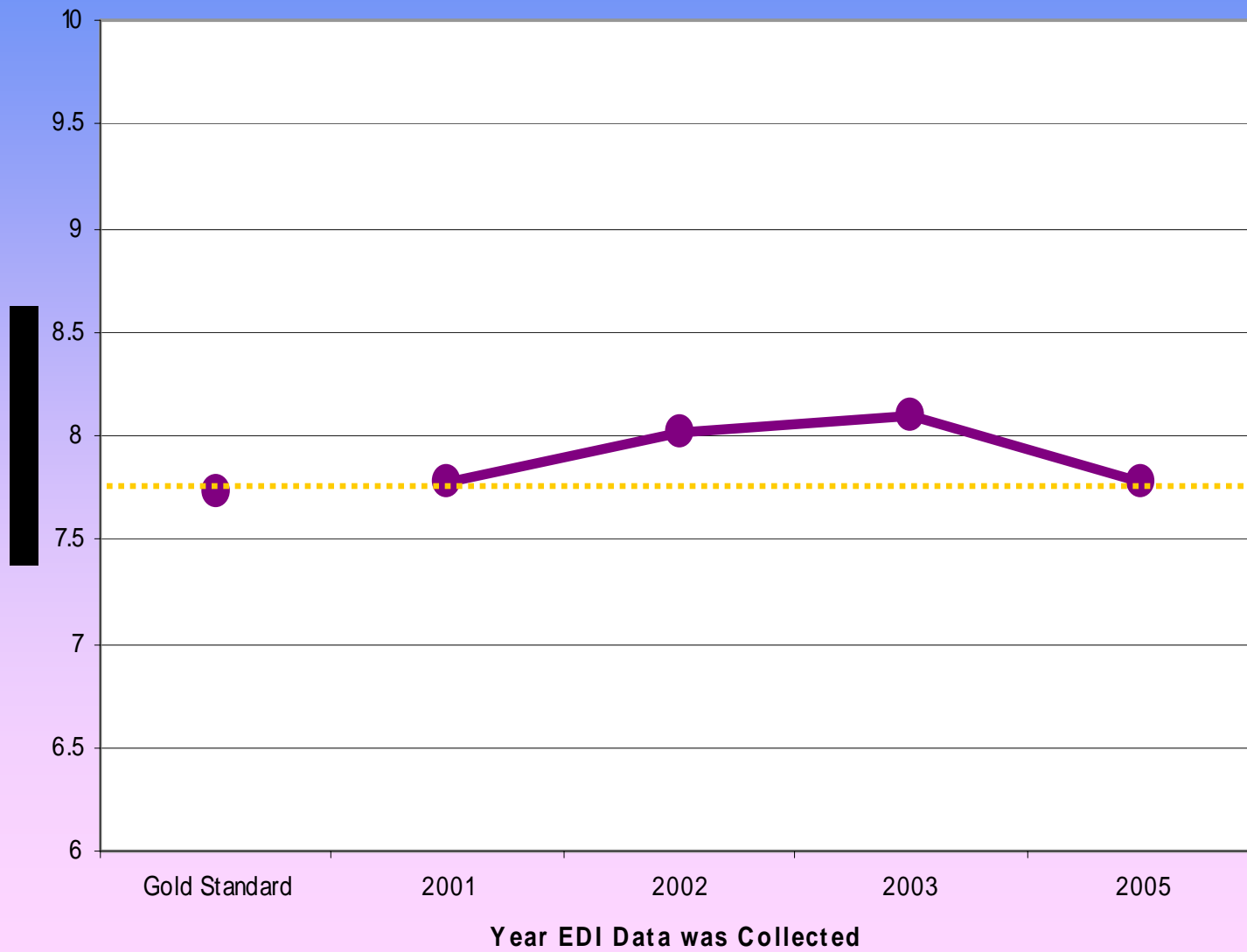
# Social Competence



# Emotional Maturity

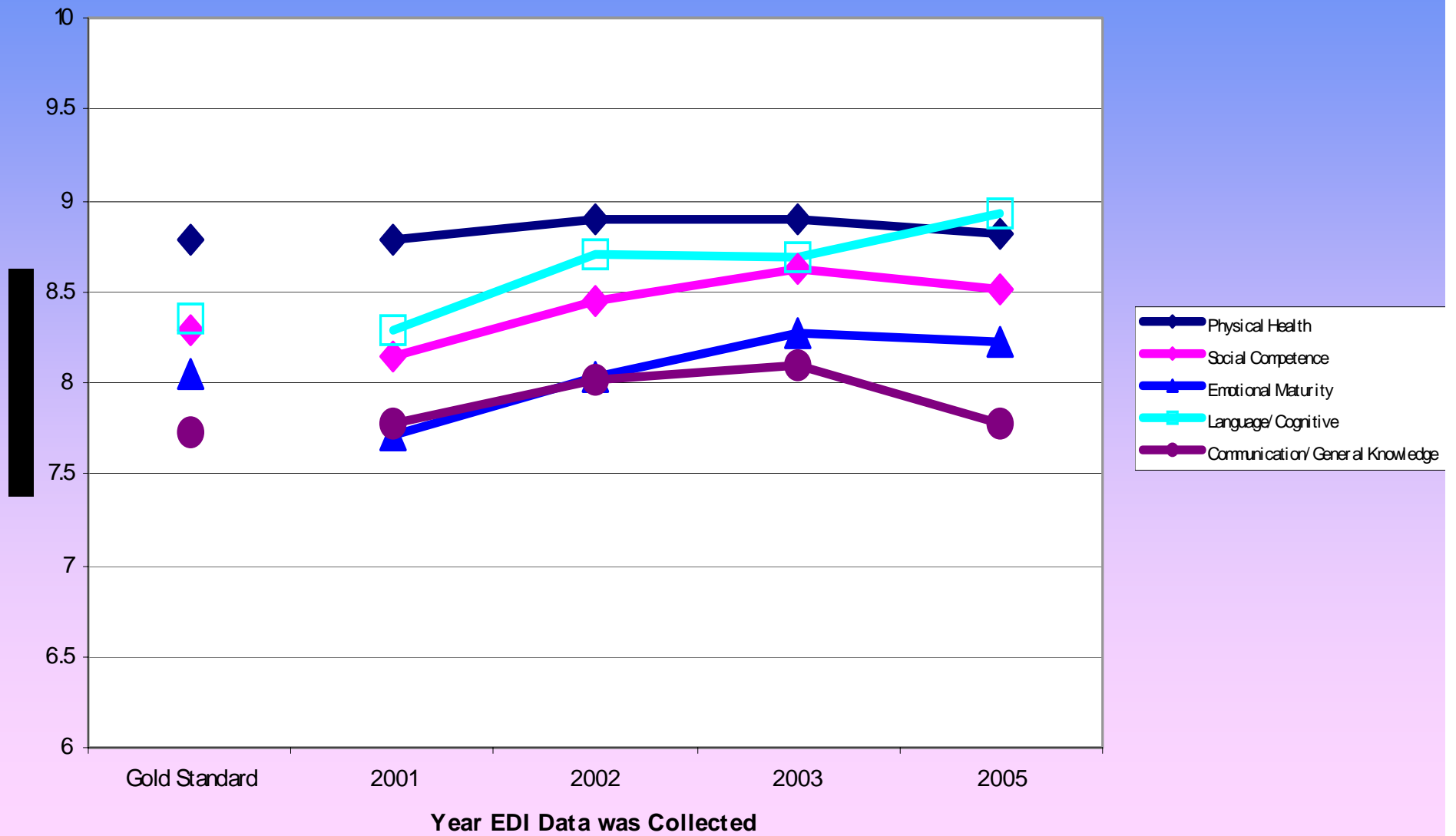


# Communication and General Knowledge





## EDI Means for Niagara Falls and Normative Sample

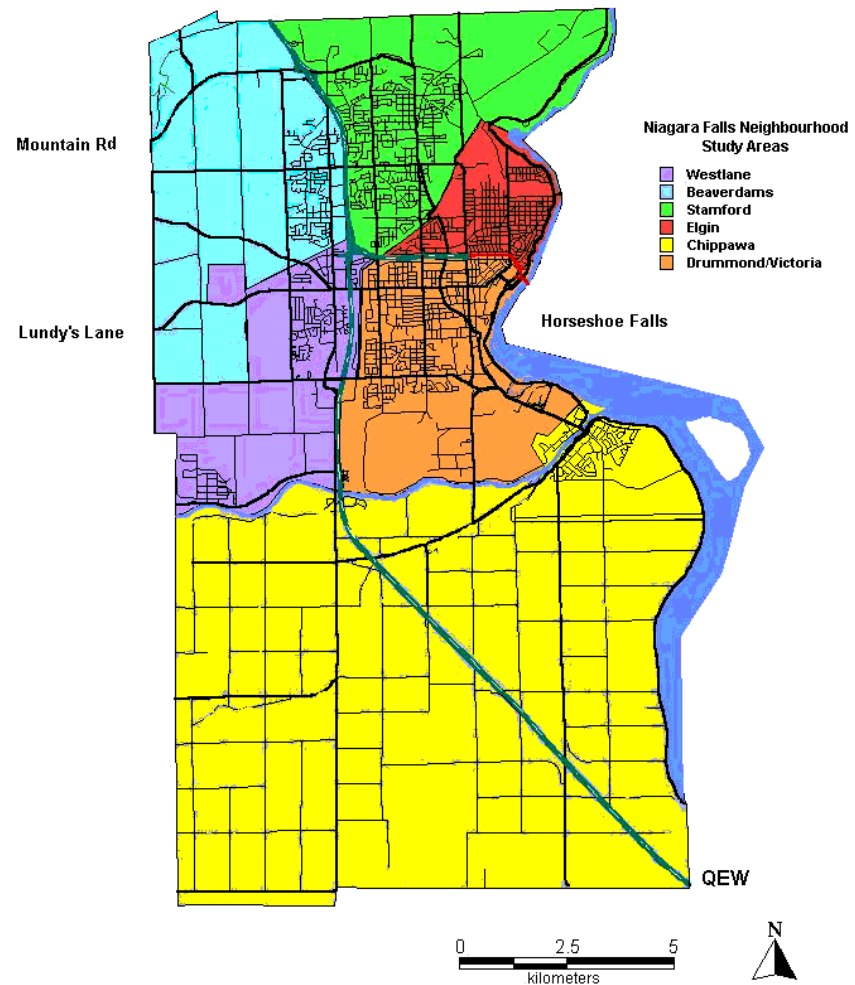


# Results by Neighbourhood Study Area

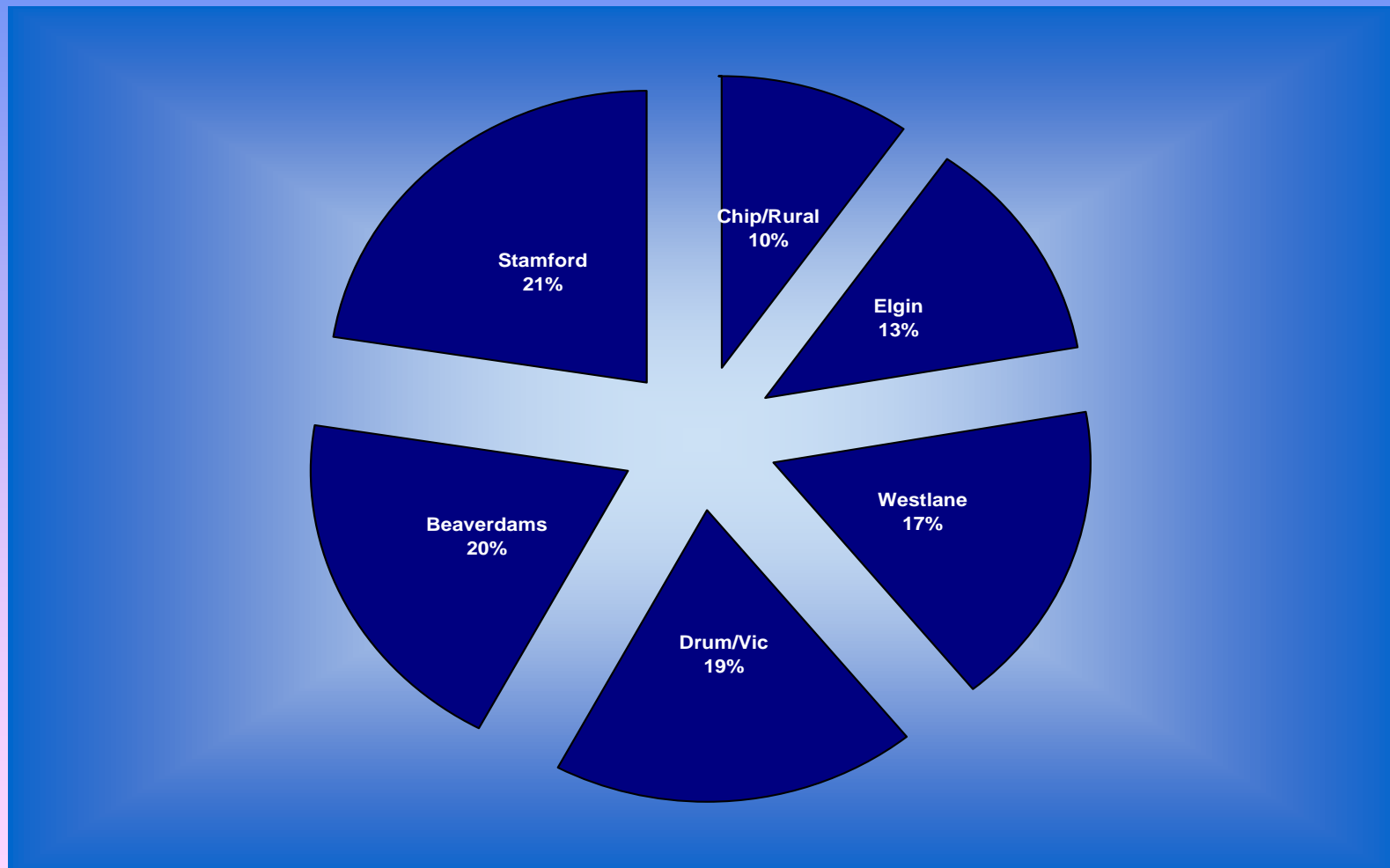
## Neighbourhood Study Areas

- Beaverdams
- Chippawa/Rural
- Drummond/Victoria
- Elgin
- Stamford
- Westlane

## Early Development Instrument Neighbourhood Study Areas

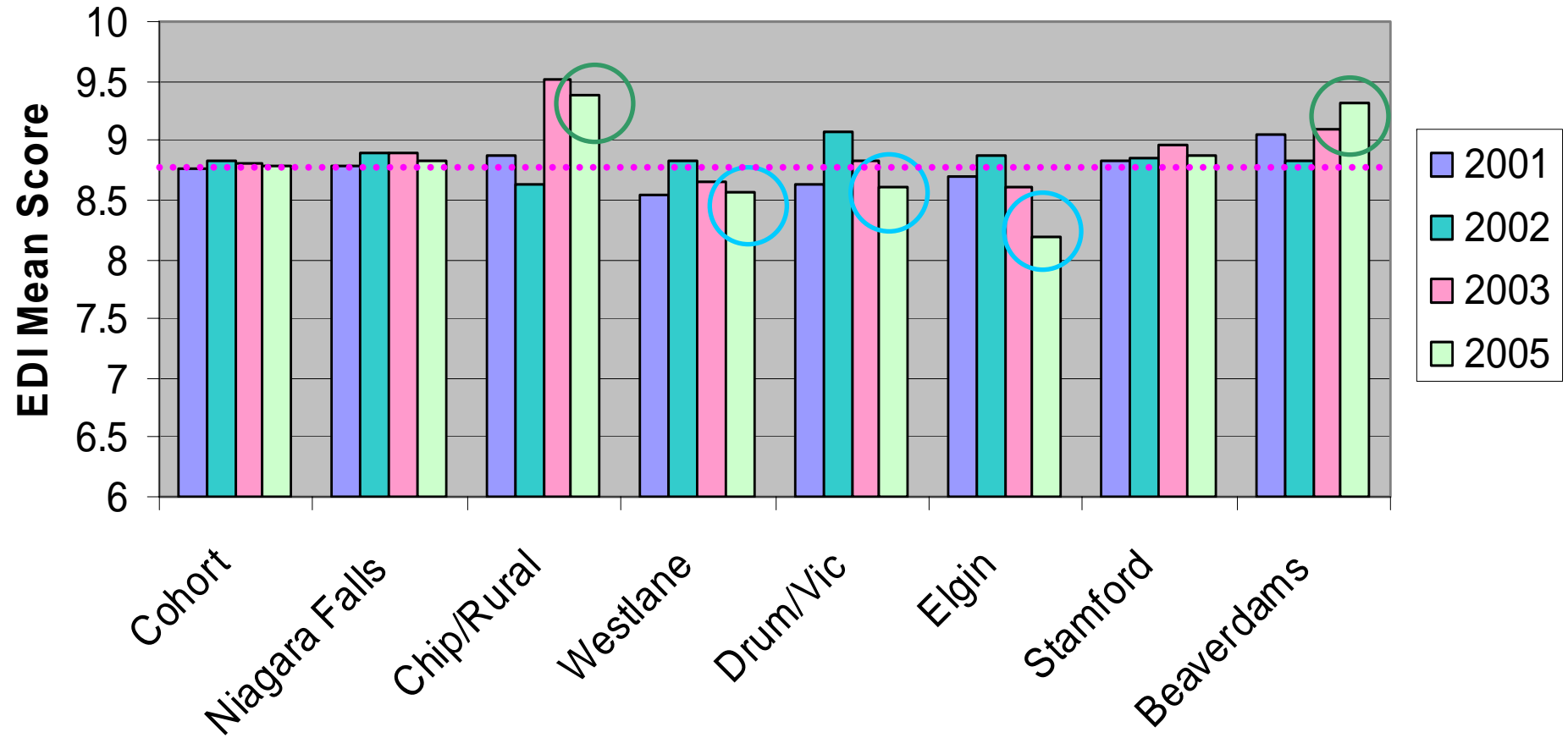


# Percentage of SK Children in the Niagara Falls Sample living in each Neighbourhood Study Area

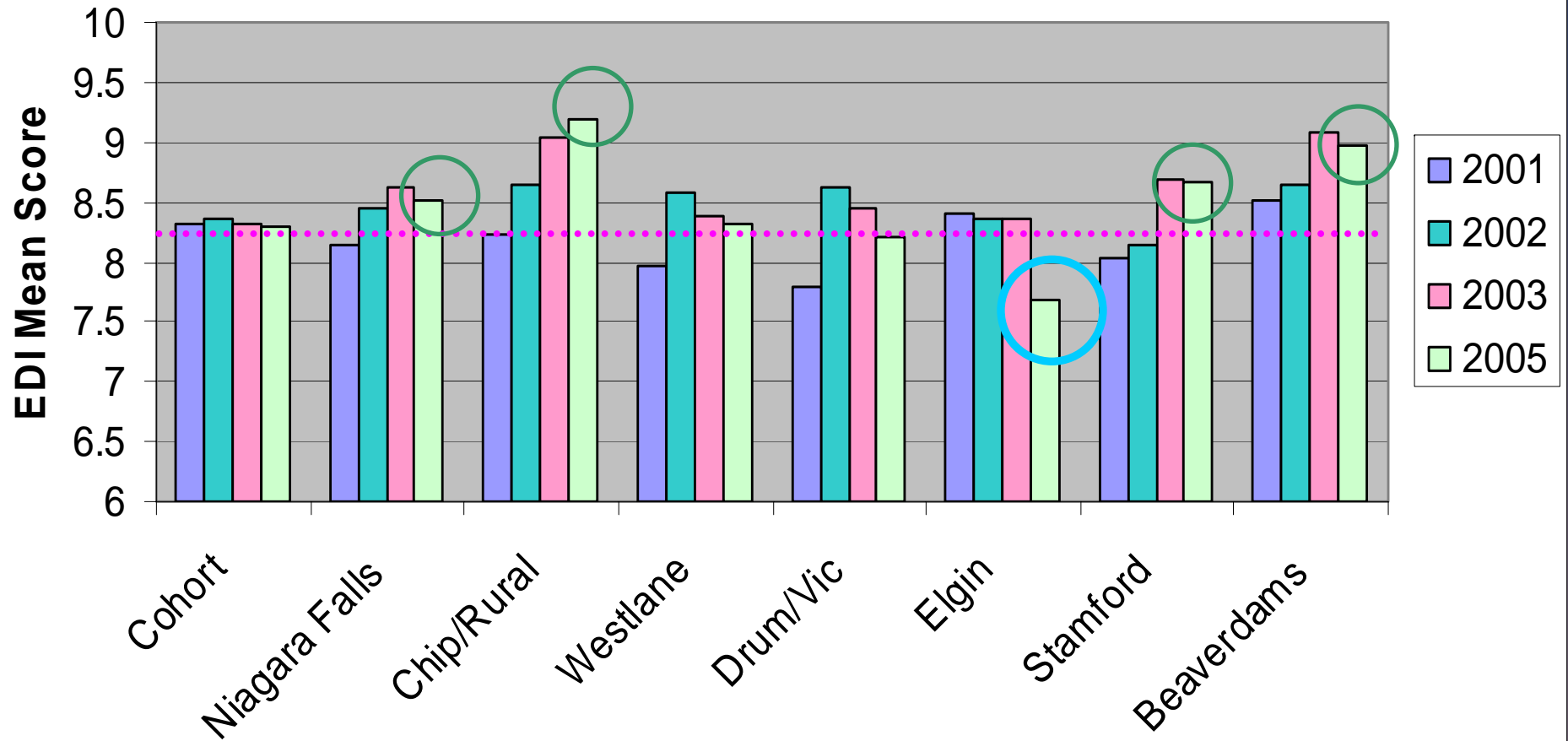


\* Number of SK Children in 2005 Niagara Falls NSA Sample = 531

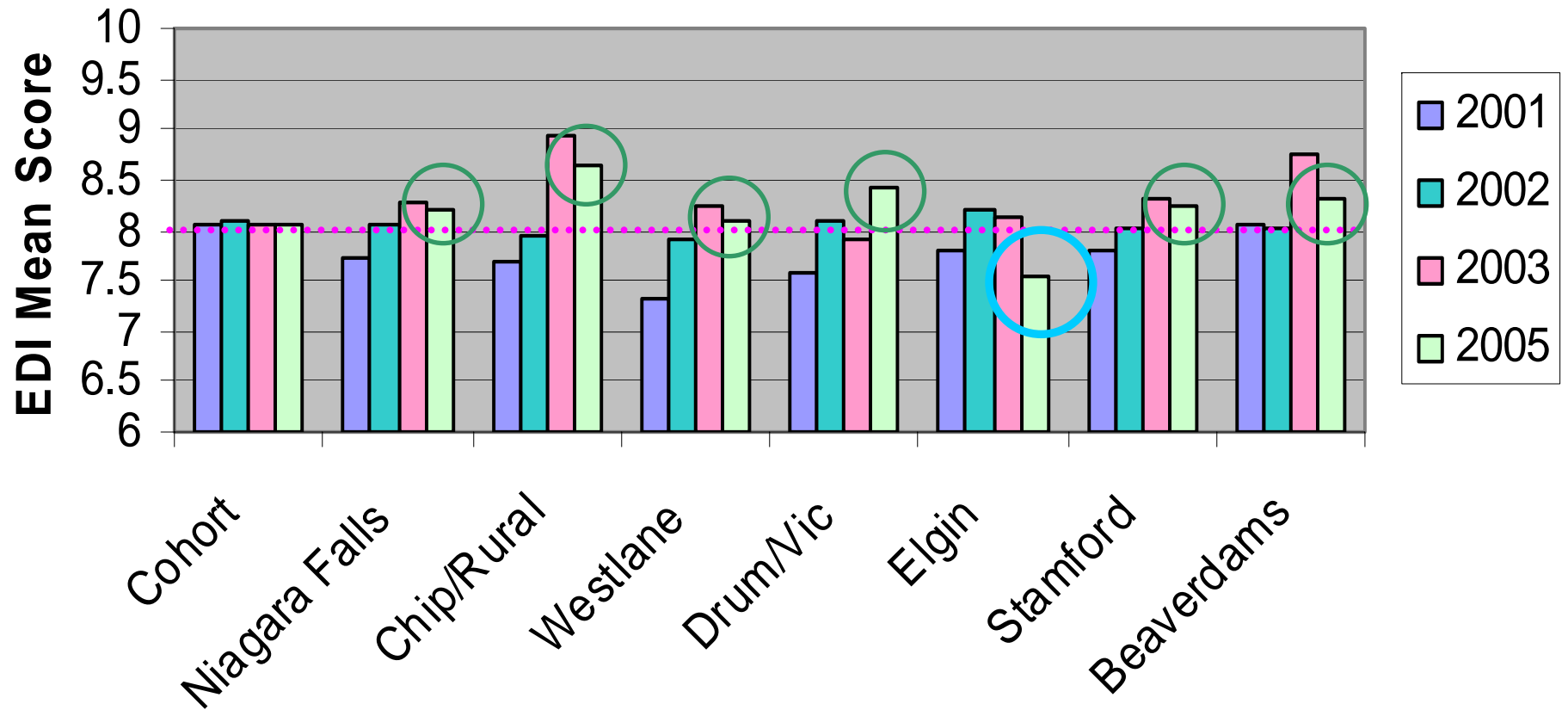
# Physical Health and Well-Being



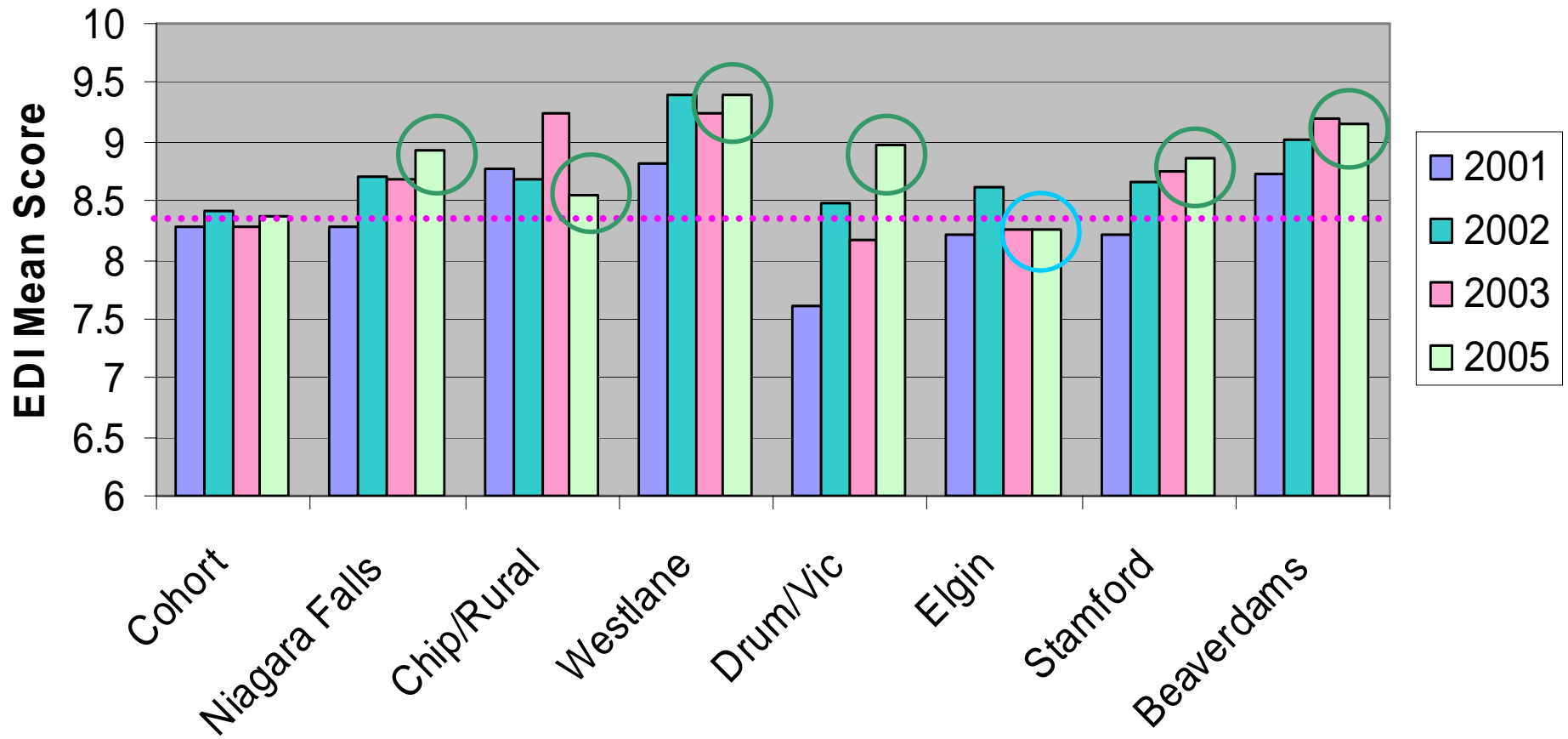
# Social Competence



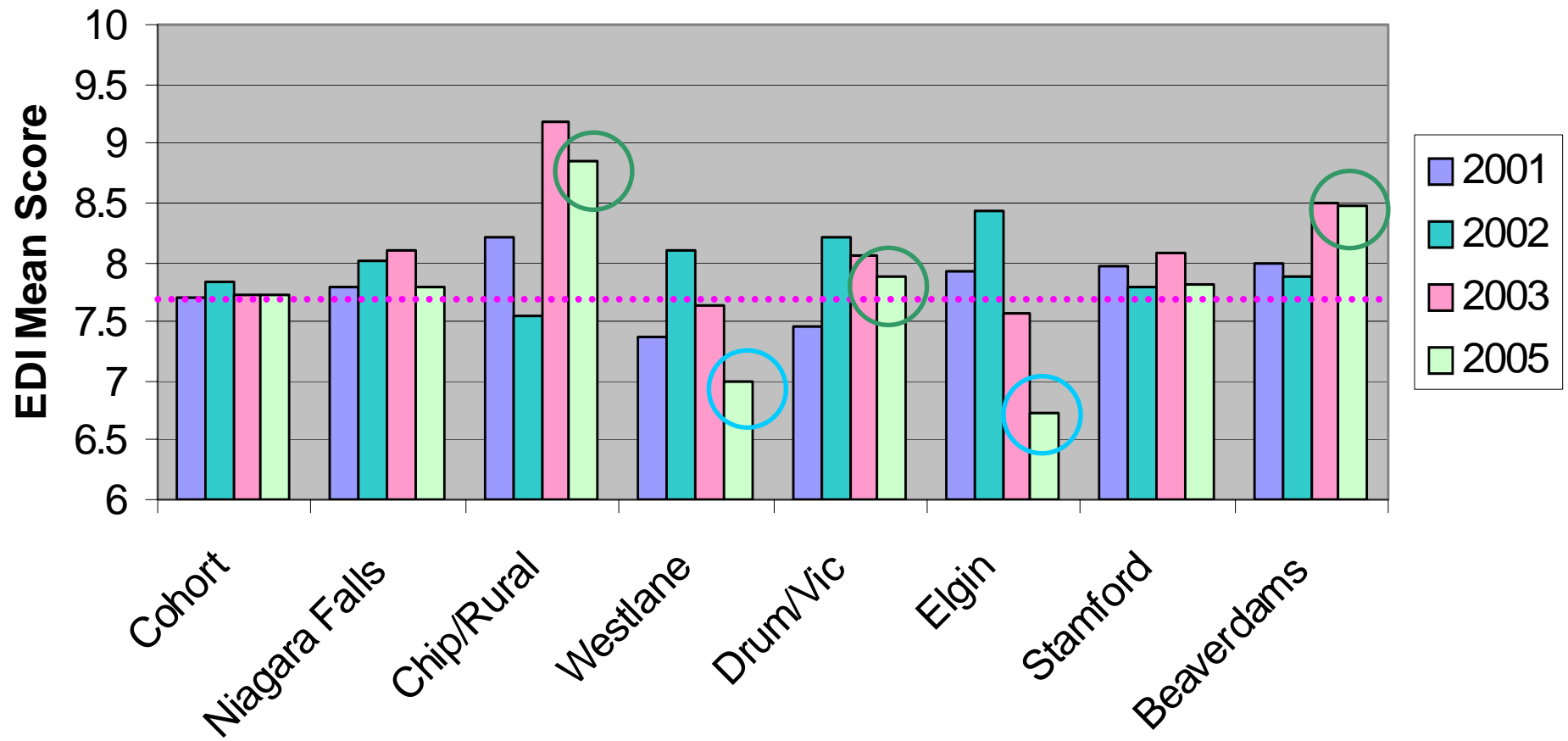
# Emotional Maturity



# Language and Cognitive Development



# Communication Skills and General Knowledge





# Chippawa Rural

- Overall Areas of Strength:
  - Physical Health and Well-Being
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Beaverdams

- Overall Areas of Strength:
  - Physical Health and Well-Being
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Stamford

- Overall Areas of Strength:
  - Physical Health and Well-Being
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Drummond/Victoria

- Overall Areas of Strength:
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge
- Areas of Need:
  - Physical Health and Well-Being

# Elgin

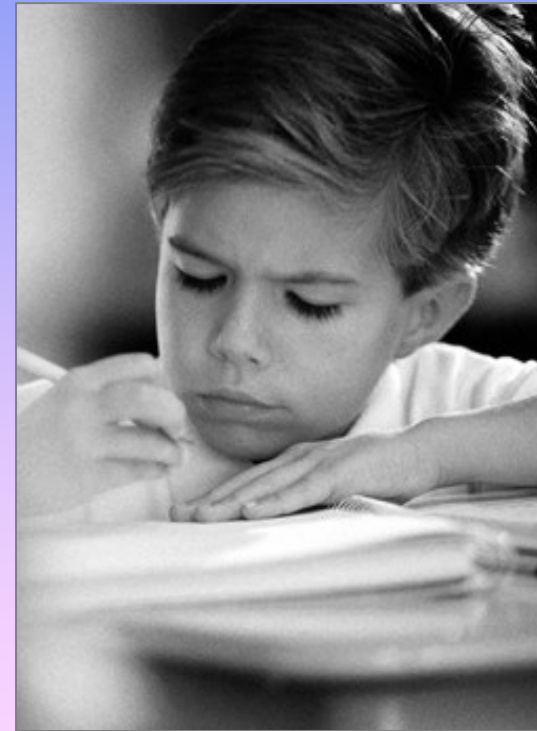
- Areas of Need:
  - Physical Health and Well-Being
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge

# Westlane

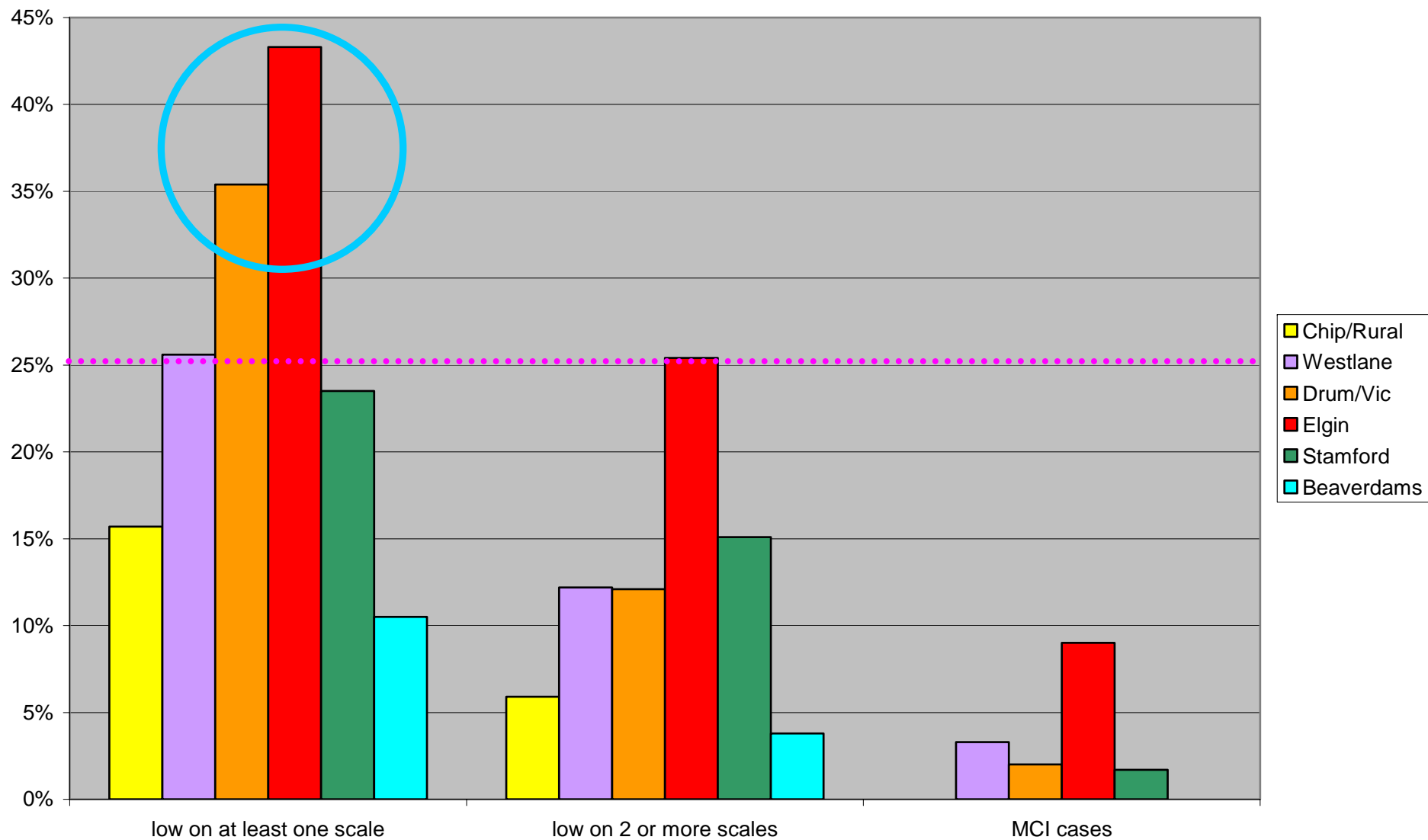
- Overall areas of Strength:
  - Social Competence
  - Emotional Maturity
  - Language and Cognitive Development
- Areas of Need:
  - Communication Skills and General Knowledge
  - Physical Health and Well-Being

# Children at Risk

- Children with low scores on **one domain** may have difficulty adjusting to and being ready for school



### Percent of Vulnerable Children within each Neighbourhood Study Area



\* Number of SK Children in Niagara Falls NSA Sample = 531

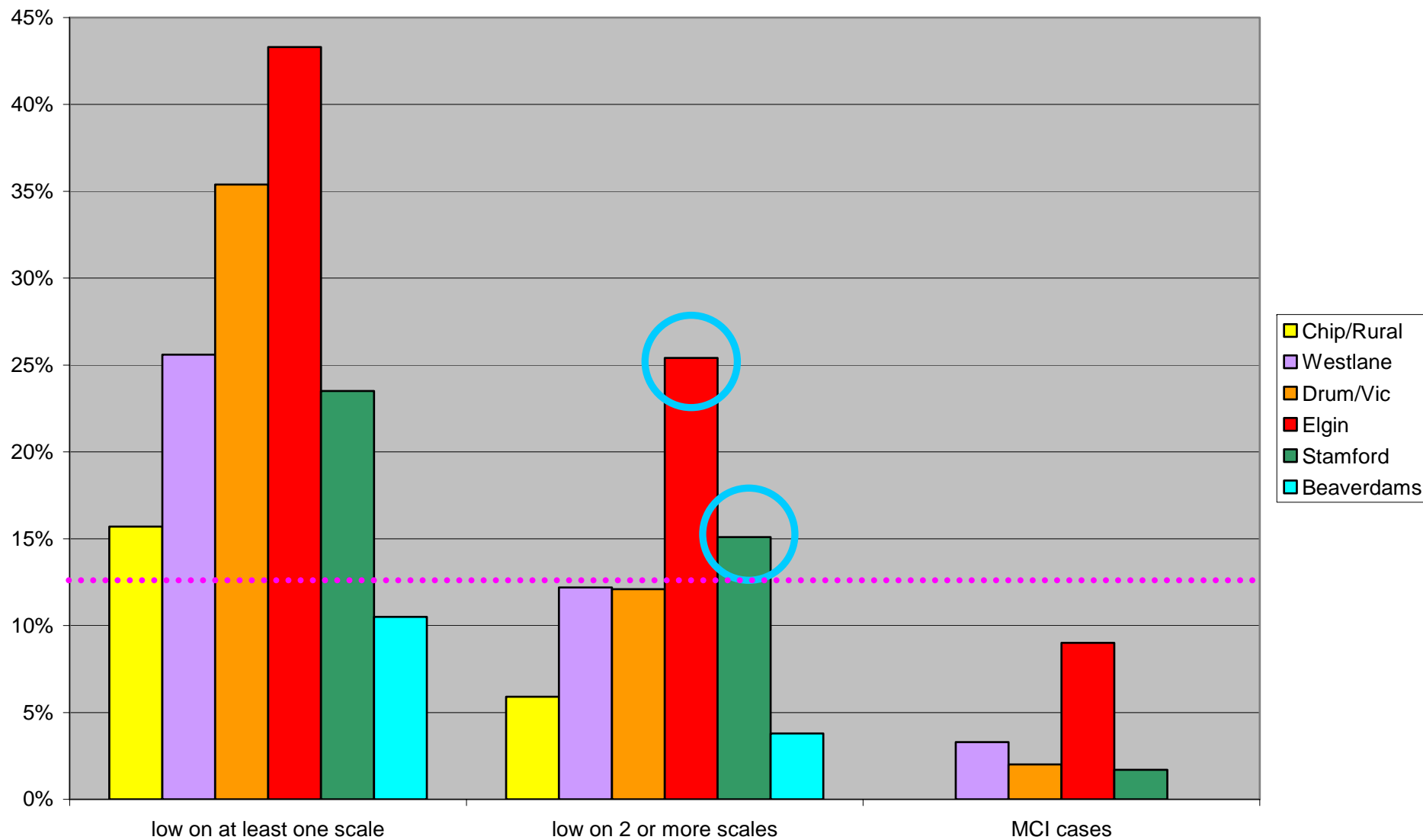


# Children at Risk

- Children with low scores on ***two or more domains*** are considered at risk or vulnerable



### Percent of Vulnerable Children within each Neighbourhood Study Area



\* Number of SK Children in Niagara Falls NSA Sample = 531

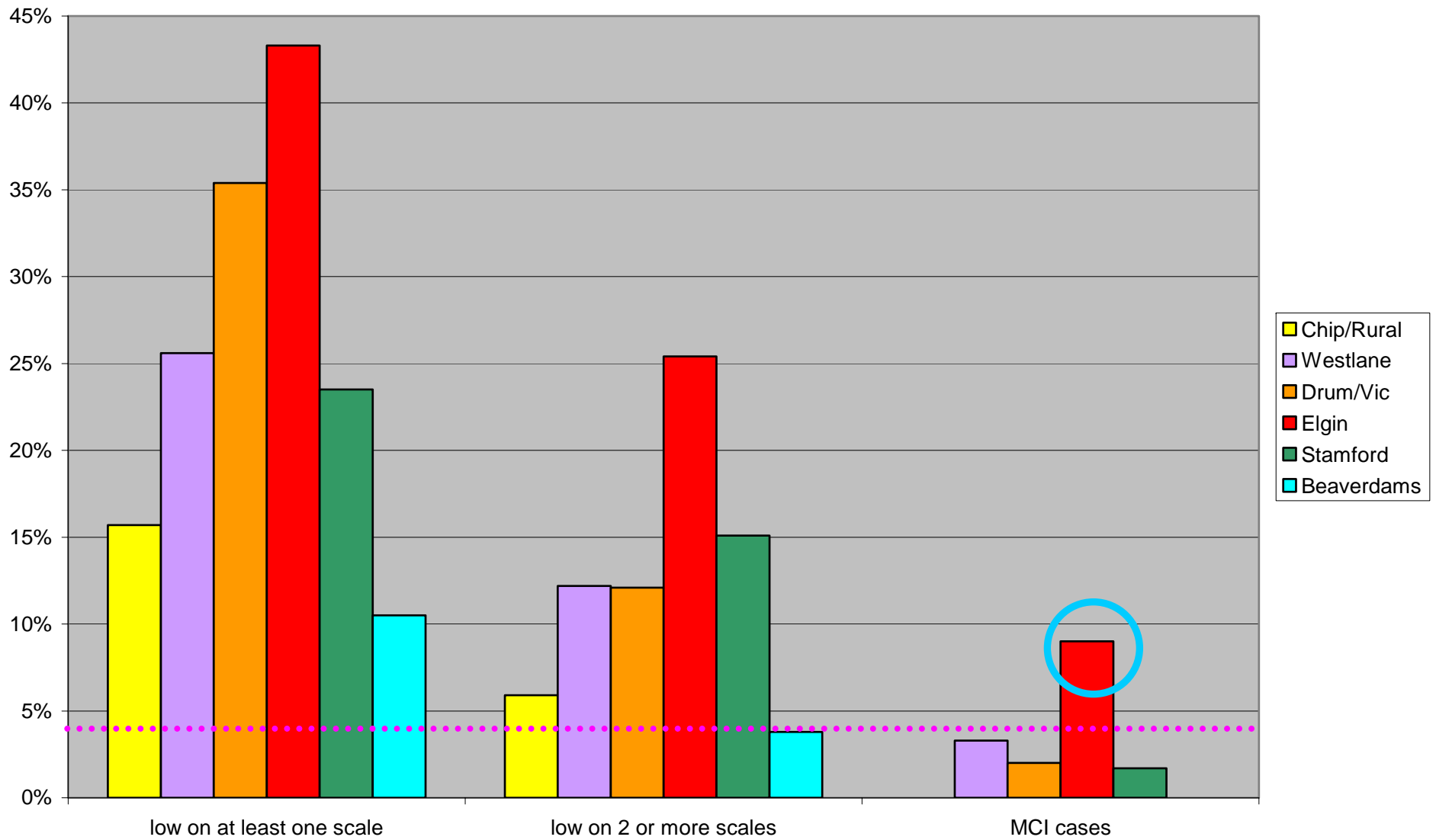
# Children with Multiple Challenges

## ***Multiple Challenge Index (MCI)***

Children are considered to have multiple challenges when they score low on **9 or more subdomains**, as their challenges are spread across at least 3 of the main Domains



### Percent of Vulnerable Children within each Neighbourhood Study Area



\* Number of SK Children in Niagara Falls NSA Sample = 531

# What's next?

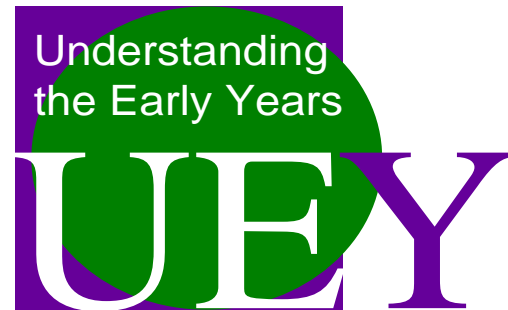
- Questions?
- What are some of the ways you envision the data being used?
- What next steps do you recommend in order to improve understanding and build capacity in Niagara Falls' communities?
- How might we work together so these results are useful and help to evoke action to improve children's readiness to learn?

# Thank you!



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COMMUNITY RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

UEY Niagara is a federally funded project of the Applied  
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